THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) Sir, the year-wise number of consequential train accidents at unmanned level crossings during the last three years is as under:

Year	No. of Unmanned Level Crossing Accidents
2004-05	65
2005-06	65
2006-07	72

(b) In order to pre-empt possibility of unmanned level crossing accidents, various steps including levelling road surface at the crossings, proper road signs to warn road, users, speed breakers/rumble strips on the approach road and whistle boards for the train drivers to whistle while approaching the crossings are provided. As most of these accidents are caused due to negligence of road users, public awareness programmes and publicity campaigns through various electronic and print media including street plays, are also undertaken regularly to educate them for observing safe practices while negotiating unmanned level crossings. Joint ambush checks with the involvement of civil authorities are conducted to check the erring road users.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Unmanned level crossings, on reaching the laid down traffic volume criteria of manning, are progressively manned. Recently, as a special measure, zonal railways have been given powers to consider and sanction 'Limited Use Subways' in lieu of unmanned level crossings wherever technically feasible. Efforts are also being made to close down sparsely used unmanned level crossings suggesting their merger with another level crossing/ Road Over Bridge/Road Under Bridge in the close vicinity where traffic can be easily diverted.

Suicide by farmers during last one decade

†*238. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the period of farmers committing suicides has started since almost last one decade;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the number of suicides committed by farmers during 2001 to 2005 is higher than the number of such cases during 1997 to 2001; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the number of suicide cases reported in above said periods?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), Ministry of Home Affairs started reporting the data regarding suicides by farmers under the category "self-employed (farming/agriculture)" in their publication titled "Accidental Death & Suicides in India", since the year 1995. As per the said report, the average number of suicides by farmers in a year as mentioned under the category "self-employed (farming/agriculture)" for the period 1997-2001 was about 15,747 compared to about 17,384 for the period 2001-2005. The year-wise data for the period 1997-2005 under the had "self employed (farming/agriculture)" in the NCRB reports is enclosed as Statement (*See* below). However, these suicides are not necessarily due to agriculture related reasons.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement

Number of Suicides Reported under the Head "Self Employed (Farming/Agriculture)" in the Reports of National Crime Records Bureau for the period 1997—2005.

Year	Number
1997	13622
1998	16015
1999	16082
2000	16603
2001	16415
2002	17971
2003	17164
2004	18241
2005	17131

Aircraft Vacuum System to Replace System of Open Discharge

*239. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our Indian Railway System is the only Railway System in the world that has open discharge of faecal matter spreading 3 lakh litres of human waste from open discharge toilets emanating bad smell, contaminating soil and water causing health hazard;

(b) whether it would not be possible to advocate aircraft vaccum system to replace the old fashioned present system of open discharge; and

(c) whether a time-frame would be prescribed for this process?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI LALU PRASAD): (a) No, Sir. Indian Railways are not the only system which have coach toilet systems with 'open' discharge for disposal of human waste.

(b) and (c) Indian Railways have taken up a project of development of an environment friendly coach toilet discharge system. There are broadly two technologies being used the world over for environment friendly toilet systems, *viz.*, 'Vacuum assisted retention' type as used in aircrafts etc. and 'Biological degradation' type. Procurement action is in hand for both the types of environment friendly toilet systems and field trials have been planned for these. Based on the results of field trials and other developments, a final view shall be taken on the type of environment friendly toilets to be adopted on coaches of Indian Railways.

Funds allocated to Sikkim for development of Horticulture

*240. SHRI O.T. LEPCHA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of funds allocated to the various States, particularly to Sikkim, for development of horticulture during the last three years, State-wise;